

Amendment and Response

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Serial No.: 09/821,669

Confirmation No.: 4980

Filed: 29 March 2001

For: METHOD FOR MAKING A STEM WEB

E1 providing a tool comprising a plurality of stem-forming holes formed in a surface of the tool, wherein the plurality of stem-forming holes are arranged in a plurality of discrete regions on the surface of the tool;

pressing the layer of polymeric material against the surface of the tool, wherein a portion of the polymeric material enters the stem-forming holes;

separating the layer of polymeric material from the surface of the tool, wherein a plurality of stems are distributed in a plurality of discrete regions on the web construction; and

stretching the elastic substrate after separating the layer of polymeric material from the surface of the tool, wherein the layer of polymeric material fractures.

E2 34. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 32, further comprising forming indentations in the layer of polymeric material between the plurality of discrete regions of stems, wherein the layer of polymeric material fractures along the indentations.

E3 41. (NEW) The method of claim 11, further comprising cooling the discrete quantities of the polymeric material to a non-molten state after forming the plurality of stems.

42. (NEW) A method of making a web construction comprising a plurality of stems distributed in discrete regions on the web construction, the method comprising:

providing a web construction comprising a web and a plurality discrete polymeric regions on a first major surface of the web, wherein each discrete polymeric region comprises a discrete quantity of polymeric material;

providing a tool comprising a plurality of stem-forming holes formed in a surface of the tool;

pressing each discrete polymeric region of the plurality of discrete polymeric regions on the first major surface of the web against the surface of the tool when the polymeric material of each discrete polymeric region is above its softening point, wherein a portion of the polymeric material enters the stem-forming holes; and

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separating the web construction from the surface of the tool, wherein each discrete polymeric region comprises a plurality of stems formed by the stem-forming holes.

E3 43. (NEW) The method according to claim 42, further comprising deforming the plurality of stems to produce an enlarged end on each stem of the plurality of stems.

44. (NEW) The method according to claim 42, wherein the plurality of discrete polymeric regions are located on only one major surface of the web.

45. (NEW) The method according to claim 42, wherein the plurality of discrete polymeric regions are separated by inter-regions revealing exposed portions of a first major surface of the web.

46. (NEW) The method according to claim 42, wherein the web comprises loop structures adapted to lock with the plurality of stems.

47. (NEW) The method according to claim 42, wherein the web comprises an elastic web.

48. (NEW) The method according to claim 42, wherein the plurality of discrete polymeric regions comprises a plurality of stripes extending over the first major side of the web.

49. (NEW) The method according to claim 42, wherein each stem of the plurality of stems comprises a hook.

50. (NEW) A method of manufacturing a mechanical fastener, the method comprising:
providing at least one discrete quantity of polymeric material on a fibrous major surface of a nonwoven web, wherein the at least one discrete quantity of polymeric material forms at least one discrete polymeric region entangled with the fibrous major surface; and

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forming a plurality of stems in the at least one discrete polymeric region.

51. (NEW) The method according to claim 50, further comprising simultaneously pressing the at least one discrete quantity of polymeric material against the fibrous major surface of the nonwoven web while forming the plurality of stems.

52. (NEW) The method according to claim 50, wherein the nonwoven web comprises a film layer.

53. (NEW) The method according to claim 52, wherein the film layer comprises an elastic film layer.

54. (NEW) The method according to claim 50, wherein the nonwoven comprises an elastic web.

55. (NEW) The method according to claim 50, wherein the at least one discrete polymeric region is surrounded by the fibrous major surface of the nonwoven web.

56. (NEW) The method according to claim 50, wherein the at least one discrete polymeric region comprises a plurality of discrete patches on the fibrous major surface of the nonwoven web.

57. (NEW) The method according to claim 50, further comprising deforming the plurality of stems to produce an enlarged end on each stem of the plurality of stems.
